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DAVITT'S LIFE:

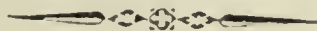
IN

Sunshine and Shade.



BY

ONE WHO KNEW HIM.

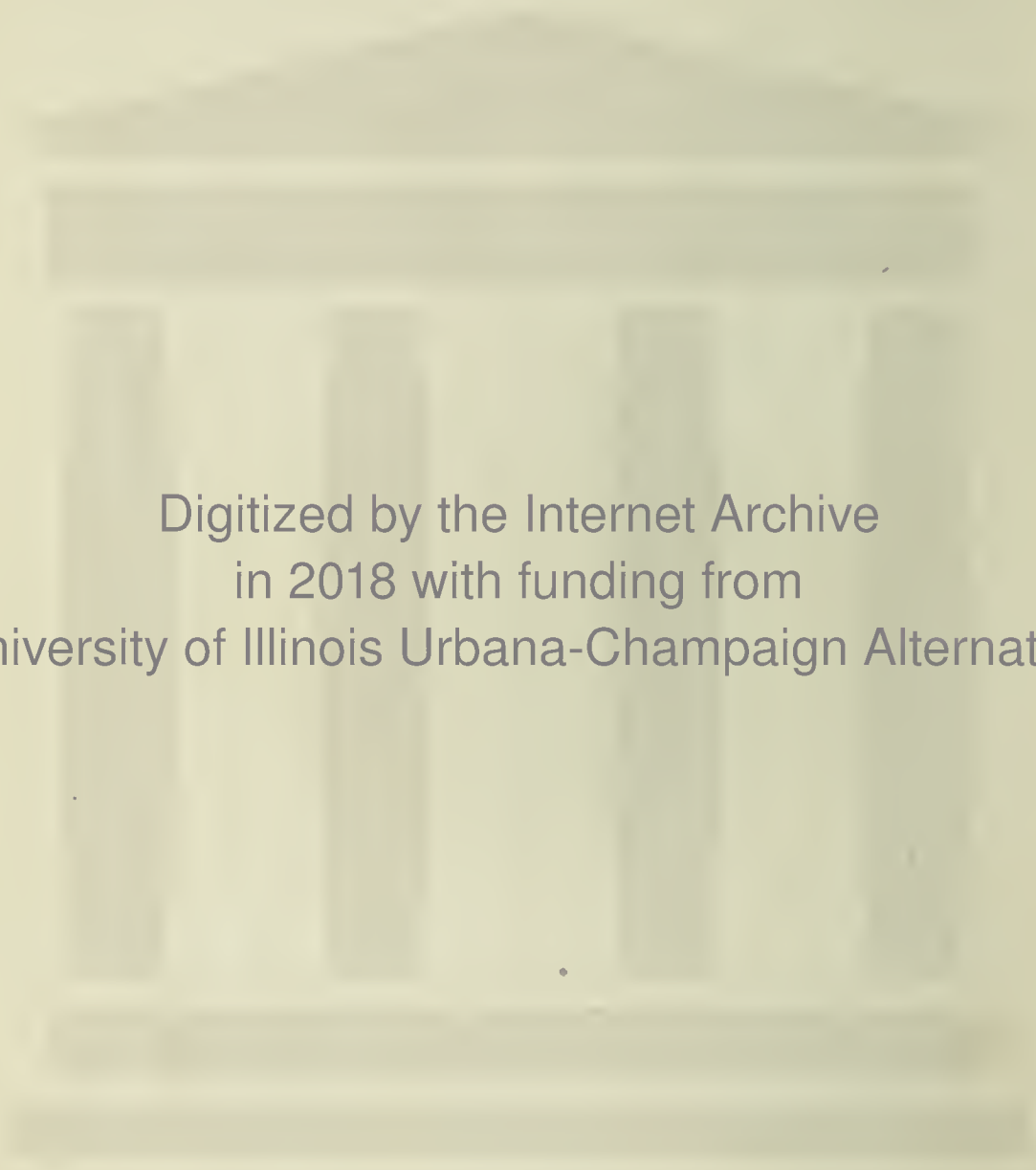


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INTRODUCTION.

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DAVITT'S LIFE:

IN SUNSHINE AND SHADE.

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ON Thursday, the 3rd of February, 1881, it is to be hoped, for humanity's sake, there were few hearts of men in which there were not some feelings of pain, or shame, or indignation, when it was known to them that the Liberal English Government had arrested Michael Davitt for violating the conditions of his ticket-of-leave. The conceiver of a scheme of agitation whose success has well-nigh peacefully revolutionized a nation, and attracted the interested attention of two hemispheres to this hitherto almost unnoticed land; the rescuer of thousands of his countrymen, first from the horrors of starvation, next from the shackles of a slavery which morally and actually degraded them; the honest hero of millions of people at two sides of the Atlantic; the undoubted wielder of a power which a monarch might envy; at the same time a solitary individual whose every word and every step were open to the light of day, who sought no secrecy, and obeyed the law—that such a man as this should be seized by a powerful Government and cast manacled into a dungeon, in the convict dress of shame, to herd with murderers, garotters, and thieves, the hell-growth of a population's depravity, was an act which might well rouse the dark exasperation of his friends and the indignation of all honest men. Michael Davitt is all that we have said and more, and men of every party, so they be just, must acknowledge it. He is a social and political

reformer, with a high and noble purpose, and a grasp of mind and a strength of will that fits him for the carrying out of such a purpose. He is a patriot who loved his country even unto dungeons and death. He is an enthusiast, with the indomitable courage of an enthusiast, who recks of no danger, but an enthusiast who never loses his head, always preserving the even balance of his judgment, and his clear, cool faculties in every emergency. He is a man made to be the leader in a mighty struggle, and in his position in the Irish Land Movement, he was the right man in the right place. These things none dare gainsay of him. If he was the foe of an aristocratic oligarchy, he was an open foe that stood on an honourable ground. He was an adversary worthy of any steel, and in the battle-ground of honourable politics he was pre-eminently worthy of being fought with his own weapons. It is not fitting here to enter into a political controversy, nor is it intended. But one cannot approach the consideration of Michael Davitt in any regard, without noting this most essential and unavoidable aspect; without marking well, as it shall be marked in history, this strange, monstrous incongruity of such a man in a convict prison as a criminal, while the ministers who have put him there, vaunt of building up the glory of their administration out of the state of things, which he—emphatically he, visibly to the whole world—with labour, and thought and struggle unceasing, heroically brought about.

In this regard the iniquity of jaildom stands out the most obtrusively. But there is another aspect in which it is none the less shocking and repulsive. Political admirers may marvel and storm at it; but it is those who had the good fortune to know Michael Davitt's personal character who will feel the real pang. With all his stern characteristics, it is not hyperbole to say that the founder of the Irish National Land League is as gentle as a woman. With a heart naturally generous, as all great and brave hearts are, he was softened and not hardened by his terrible sufferings. Not ignorant of miseries himself, he learned to succour the miserable. In his daily intercourse he was kindly to every man, and his natural, courteous manners, and modest

winning mien gained him favour amongst all who encountered him. To his friends, need it be said, in what relation this noble nature stood in the period of his liberty. "Leal" and "true" are good words; they are feeble of meaning here. But why proceed in analytical generalities? A single illustration is worth a thousand descriptions; and there is not wanting one illustration, which of itself should be an index to Michael Davitt's whole character. In the year 1870, while he stood in a British dock, tried by a British judge—the present Chief Justice Cockburn—and when an informer whom he never saw in his life until he appeared in the Court (Corydon, of unblessed memory) swore away his liberty, there stood beside him in the dock an innocent young fellow, Wilson by name, charged with the same "offence," whose liberty was also sworn away. Wilson had no connection with the Fenian movement whatsoever. Nevertheless, both were convicted and sentenced—Michael Davitt to fifteen years and Wilson to seven years' penal servitude. It was at this supreme moment that the soul of Davitt spoke out of him, and be his action cherished in Irish memory as a glorious incentive to noble deeds for many a day. "My lord!" said he, in effect, "Wilson is entirely innocent. I alone am guilty of whatever offence there is. Let Wilson go, and I will serve his seven years when I have served my own fifteen." But the law had to take its cruel course irrespective of justice or noble actions. And this is the man, this is the Michael Davitt whom the Press of an enlightened nation jibe at for his convict's dress and his ticket-of-leave; and at whose arrest and fresh prosecution the Senate of that nation, the Legislative assembly of hundreds of British "gentlemen," shouted in a cowardly shout of savage and exultant joy. Be this writ down, and remembered to their lasting humiliation and disgrace.

This rare man passed a life, unsullied from the earliest record of it. Through his first scene of striving in the movement to free his country by force. Through the frightful period of his imprisonment, through the too-brief term of his liberty, and down to the very latest moment of it, till he was dragged back to the jail-hell again, his actions and his principles were con-

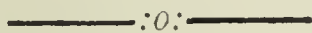
sistently the same. He preached to men the doctrine of God's justice and mercy; he preached devotion to fatherland; he preached determination and fearlessness; and, above all, he preached peace. It is a splendid and consoling thing to have on record that the very day before he was seized by the detectives, his last words were an admonition to the people to be peaceable and not to stain their souls with outrage or crime. It is also a proud thing to think that his last written words were equally characteristic of him. They were his indignant denial of the statement that he was about to fly from danger on the Coercion Bill being passed, and his brave announcement that he would remain in Ireland and share the consequences of his acts.

Now that he is again snatched from amongst them, his countrymen and countrywomen will be loving—greedy of every incident of his dark and glorious career. As a poor tribute to this feeling, the present little work has been compiled by one who knew Michael Davitt, and had the honour of being his personal friend. Every fact is collected with care; a sketch is given of his prison life, partly in his own words—words such as make the heart sick and the blood curdle in one's veins; and the short biography is complete down to the last that was seen of him by eyes of friends, before he was spirited away from God's light and freedom a second time.

Michael Davitt left a work for the Irish people to perform. His cell to-day is brightened with the thought that they will perform it, and that the hour is near at hand, when, given to the sun and to his country again, the climax of glory for him in this life shall have been reached, and his name enshrined forever in the hagiology of Ireland's martyrs.



HIS BLAMELESS LIFE.



THE best part of the life of this remarkable patriot has been spent in faithfully and fearlessly serving Ireland, and the sunshine and the shades of that career must have been marked by all who note the history of our times. For ten years Davitt's has been a prominent, though at times a hidden, figure in the political annals of this country; and though, for seven long and dreary years of the ten he was ground beneath the killing discipline of a British prison, his memory was still fresh in the minds of all who knew the man, or who had seen his noble conduct in the dock of the Old Bailey. It was in the year 1846 that Davitt was born at the picturesque village of Straid, a few miles from Castlebar, in the County of Mayo. His father, who was a small tenant-farmer, was cruelly evicted from his holding in 1851. Young Davitt with his parents turned back upon the country for which he has since suffered so much, and went to reside in Lancashire. Here the family lived by honest industry for a quarter of a century. When only nine years of age the brave fellow sought employment in a cotton mill at Haslingden, and it was here that he lost his right arm. When attending some machinery one day the forearm got caught in a wheel, and so serious were the injuries sustained that the surgeons resolved upon amputating the arm right from the shoulder. Being thus incapacitated from earning his livelihood with his hands, Davitt turned his attention to his books, and at the Wesleyan school of Haslingden he made fair progress. At sixteen years of age he obtained a situation at a local post-office as letter carrier; but ever ambitious and desiring to better himself he became a commercial traveller. He was next heard of in connection with a charge, or rather a double charge of "loitering at a London railway station, with an unlawful intent," and of conspiracy in the Fenian movement. Davitt had been travelling for a firm

engaged in the manufacture of firearms, and, with John Wilson, he was apprehended upon the 14th of May, 1870. Wilson, Davitt still maintains, was perfectly innocent; but they were both tried and convicted. The preliminary proceedings took place upon the 3rd of June, before Mr. D'Eyncourt, the magistrate, at Marylebone, when evidence was given connecting Davitt with the despatch of firearms to Ireland. He was also charged with the illegal possession of a parcel of fifty six-chambered revolvers; and, after being several times remanded, he was at length committed to stand his trial at the Old Bailey before Lord Chief Justice Cockburn. Tried upon the 20th of July, he was convicted, as a matter of course, the nefarious Corydon getting on the table, and sentenced to fifteen years' penal servitude.

Now Wilson's conviction was to Davitt a source of the greatest pain and trouble, for Davitt, even to this day, proclaims that Wilson, who was a gunsmith of Newman-street, Birmingham, was as innocent of the charge laid against him as the babe unborn. When Wilson was condemned to seven years' penal servitude, Davitt, in answer to one of the most splendid impulses of his noble nature, as, after avowing Wilson's innocence, he sought the judge to add on his fellow-prisoner's seven years' sentence to his own of fifteen, and send him to servitude for twenty-two years; but the judge declined to alter the terms of his sentences, remarking, however, that nothing could be more creditable to Davitt than his noble proposition.

Of the horrors of his prison life I will speak in detail further on. Here it will be sufficient to say that he lived through all the hellish tortures of Millbank, Newgate, Dartmoor, and Portsmouth. The English jailers did their fiendish work like demons, and on the 19th of December, 1877, Davitt, but the shadow of his former self, was treated to a mock pardon. "British clemency" came to his relief like a wolf in lamb's clothing. He was pardoned by the right hand of "British mercy," and handed a ticket-of-leave with the left. The conditions of the ticket made life out of doors almost as damnable as it was in prison, but he left Dartmoor numbered and ticketed like a garotter, a forger, or any other such villain of the class that crowds the English jails. He reached Dublin soon afterwards, upon a Sunday afternoon, in company with Sergeant MacCarthy, and Messrs. O'Brien and Chambers, the other "pardoned" prisoners, and they were accorded a splendid reception. They were almost torn asunder by the eagerness of the crowd to shake their hands and bid them

welcome; the horses were taken from between the traces of their carriages, and they were drawn in a grand triumphal procession to the European Hotel, in Bolton Street, where the crowd was so great that the honoured ones were obliged to enter that establishment by the windows. What happened a few days afterwards does not come within my province now, but I may relate how deeply moved was Michael Davitt when in Morrisson's Hotel he beheld poor M'Carthy giving way to the burden of his prison sufferings and breathing out his last. I recollect well the evening of the "legal murder" as Davitt stood motionless and immovable at the foot of the remains of his companion, looking steadfastly with those coalblack piercing eyes of his upon M'Carthy's pale face, and I can now recall his very words, hissed out between his teeth rather than spoken, when asked by some one what had happened the ex-prisoner: "He died," said Davitt, "from a British prison"; and so thought a mixed jury of twelve a few days afterwards. Poor M'Carthy buried, Davitt took to lecturing, and a series which he delivered in England and Scotland, principally dealing with English prison life from a political prisoner's point of view, excited at the time a great deal of attention. He was one of the witnesses examined on the Special Commission, which was opened in June, 1878, for the purpose of inquiring into the working of the penal prisons, and his evidence, which was most voluminous, was specially noted by the Earl of Kimberley. Davitt during the time he was on the table made some very excellent suggestions regarding the classification of prisoners, and it was evident to all who heard him examined that nothing had pained him more in prison than being herded with reprieved murderers and thieves. In July, 1879, he set sail for America to see his mother and sister, who had been there from the break-up of their Lancashire home, and on the great, glorious and free Continent of the West he again lectured with marvellous success. Returning a few days before Christmas of the same year, he for a short time contemplated engaging in some commercial pursuit, but he resigned the ledger and counter for the pen. He became the Irish representative of the *Boston Pilot*, and it was in this great paper that some of his earliest views upon the Land Question were set out. He was the main organiser of the Land League and one of its most devoted servants. No journey was too far for Davitt if the cry of distress came from a suffering tenant; no labour too great if he could alleviate the pangs of an eviction. Davitt was active in all quarters of the country, and under his watchful care the League soon blossomed into one of the most powerful institutions in the country. Scarce a meeting was held that Davitt did not address, and if he was absent from a platform in Sligo on a Sunday morning, papers

would surely tell that he was engaged in the cause he loved so well on that day in a neighbouring county. One of his speeches—that delivered at Gurteen—brought him more trouble, as he was arrested upon the 14th November, 1879, Superintendent Mallon being in charge of the arresting party. The capture took place at Davitt's own house, in Amiens Street, in the morning, and on the same night he was lodged in Sligo Jail, with Messrs. Killen, B.L., and James Daly. They were to be tried in Dublin, the two latter on a similar charge to that laid against Davitt, but the prosecution was too absurd for the Government to attempt beneath the gaze of a Dublin court audience, and so the matter ended in smoke.

Davitt took another trip to America and collected an immense sum of money for the Land League, his efforts in the Lecture Hall being most successful. When he returned, the air was full of rumours of prosecutions for speeches delivered in some of the American cities, but no charge was made, and until the hour the warrant for his apprehension was put in force he was an unceasing and anxious member of the League.



HIS PRISON TORTURES.

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HIS trial, in which the vile John Joseph Corydon was the convicting medium, lasted from July the 5th to July the 18th, and on the evening of the latter day Davitt was condemned. During the trial he was imprisoned at Newgate, and upon the 29th of July he was removed to Millbank, a convict prison close to Westminster. Here he suffered great mental anguish; and in his records of prison life he speaks of the awful chimes of "Big Ben," which seemed to him, as he lay in his dismal cell, to mark the quarters as though they were indeed hours. Millbank was a fearful den, full of loneliness—if the word may be permitted—whilst the offscum of wicked, crime-loving London surrounded him upon all its dreary corridors. Here ten long months were spent—ten months of utter gloom, of half starvation, and of torture, bodily as well as mental. The food was somewhat better than he subsequently received at Dartmoor, and consisted of—for breakfast, eight ounces of bread, three quarters of a pint of cocoa; for dinner, four ounces of meat four days a week, six ounces of bread, and a pound of potatoes. One day of the week he was allowed a pint of shins of beef soup, and on other days a pound of suet pudding. Upon Sundays the mid-day meal was varied, and he had given him fourteen ounces of bread, four ounces of cheese, and a pint of water, whilst the supper consisted of a pint of "skilly," containing two ounces of oatmeal. It was on the 25th of May, 1871, that one of the warders of the prison practiced upon him a very cruel joke. He came to the door of Davitt's cell and told him that he was about becoming the recipient of a free pardon. The news overjoyed the convict, and he counted the chimes of the same "Big Ben" with much joy, that an hour previously had sounded so dismally in his ears. He longed for evening, when once again he would throw off the dress of shame, and would cross Westminster Bridge a free.

unfettered man ; but this devil dressed in warder's clothes had only been to Davitt's cell to play a cruel joke upon him ; and when he brought him along a corridor towards the exit gate of the jail, and Davitt's heart beat in joyous anticipation of his deliverance, it was to hand him over to a couple of warders for transfer to another prison. Dartmoor, a living, burning hell upon earth, was the point of destination, and poor Davitt, chained hand and foot, was railed from Paddington Station, upon the platform of which he had been arrested, to the Devonshire town. Of this British prison Davitt, and, indeed, all prisoners, give a painful account. In summer the stench was sickening ; whilst in winter, fogs, rain, snow, or sleet were certain to play sad havoc upon the constitutions of prisoners who were in the least prone to be delicate. Davitt, writing of this prison, says :—“ *It is quite a common occurrence at Dartmoor for men to be reported and punished for eating candles, boot oil, and other repulsive articles ; and notwithstanding that a highly offensive smell is purposely given to prison candles to prevent their being eaten instead of burned, men are driven by a system of half starvation into an animal voracity, and anything that a dog would eat is nowise repugnant to their tastes. I have seen men EAT OLD POULTICES found buried in heaps of rubbish I was assisting in carting away, and have seen BITS OF CANDLE PULLED OUT OF THE PRISON CESSPOOL AND EATEN AFTER THE HUMAN SOIL WAS WIPED OFF THEM ! ! ! !*”

And it was amongst men like these, and with such surroundings, that the best part of Michael Davitt's life was filched away by British Government. Here his occupation was BREAKING PUTRID BONES, DRAWING CARTS LIKE A BEAST OF BURDEN, AND TURNING THE HEAVY WHEEL OF A LARGE CRANK. In June, 1872, he was conveyed away in the dead of night to Portsmouth Prison, but there the diet was too good, the place too *cheerful* (what a mockery of the word) for a political prisoner, and very soon he was back again to Dartmoor. At length the day of real sunshine came, after over seven years of terrible sufferings, and upon the 19th of December, 1877, Davitt walked out of jail a free man, at least a free man upon an accursed Ticket-of-Leave. All through his jail experience he found his crime acted as an incentive to the warders, governors, and other officers, to punish him the more, and if any man on this side of the grave suffered great hardships with a meek humility, for a country he loved so devotedly, that man most assuredly was Michael Davitt.

ARRESTED ON O'CONNELL BRIDGE.

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UPON Thursday, February 3rd, about two o'clock, Davitt once again found himself within the iron grasp of the British law. The intention of his arrest was kept a profound secret by the authorities in Scotland Yard, and neither Mr. Mallon, the Chief of the Detective Department in Ireland, nor one of his staff, was aware on Thursday morning that Davitt was "wanted." There crossed by the mail steamer that morning, Mr. Williamson, the Hamlet of all great dramas played out in Scotland Yard, and Inspector Swansea, and they were armed with a warrant for the principal of the Land League, signed by the Home Secretary himself, who was exercising a right which he has over all tickets-of-leave, viz., the power of revoking them without assigning a cause. It was the intention of the English detectives, after learning of Davitt's whereabouts, to go out and get their prize themselves; but Mr. Mallon adopted a course that must, in some little measure, have been less distasteful to Davitt than if he were "picked up"—this, I believe, is the pure technicality—by the two Englishmen. Detective officer Sheridan was directed by his Chief to go over to the Land League offices, in Sackville Street, and tell Davitt that he was wanted in the Lower Castle Yard. Sheridan, at an interval, was followed by half a dozen "G men," as the occupants of Exchange Court are called in the newspapers, and he confronted Davitt in company with Messrs. Harris and Brennan, two of the traversers in the recent State Trial, upon O'Connell Bridge. Davitt, on learning Sheridan's mission sent Messrs. Harris and Brennan back to the League offices to transact some business, and bring him his great coat. "If," said Davitt, "if it is this Ticket-of-Leave business they are bringing against me, I am sure to have to travel"—and the brave advocate of the cause of the suffering tenantry of Ireland never spoke truer words. He had to travel, and that very night

too. Sheridan suggested a cab, but Davitt preferred walking across, and he arranged with his custodians to proceed in front of them. Williamson, at the Castle, read the warrant with a glib tongue, which showed that he had read many a hundred such documents, and then Davitt handed up his revolver, a magnificent, six-shooter. He was next conducted to private apartments in the Castle, where the Chief Commissioner of Police "looked over" the captive, who sat between his English guardians with a calm repose, and yet the same defiant look was in his face that ever marked it. Outside newspaper circles no one seemed to know of the arrest until the evening papers came out with the sad tidings that for the third time in ten years Michael Davitt was on a march to jail. Speculation ran wild upon the mode and route of his departure. Some said he would not be stirred until morning; others, that a gunship would take him from the bay, whilst others again argued that the North Wall or Mail Boat would not steam out to-night without the Martyr Convict.

The Kingstown route was the one adopted. The conveyance of the prisoner to the mail-boat Connaught at Kingstown, would, it was thought, be too risky by rail, so the services of a couple of cabs were sought, and in the first of these sat Davitt and his Saxon "friends," whose visiting cards are handcuffs, and whose souls seldom outspan the prescribed corners of a body warrant. In the second cab were some G men, and by the Blackrock Road the sad *cortege* wound its way to Kingstown. The party found the jetty swarmed with police, and Superintendent Armstrong, in command, looked as though he seldom had upon hands a task so important. It was about four o'clock when the party went on board the mail-boat, and Davitt preferring the open air to the stuffy cabin in the forepart of the ship, walked the decks for a couple of hours securely guarded. At length he retired below to one of the cabins set apart for first-class passengers, and under an escort of half-a-dozen detectives, he was locked into this room. When the mail-train came alongside, such old friends of the prisoner's as Messrs. Egan, Brennan, Harris and Dr. Kenny alighted, and several newspaper reporters who were thirsty for an interview. A *Freeman* representative had been specially detailed to cross to Holyhead with the captive, and his graphic account of that memorable trip, I re-publish. The stewardess gave the anxious visitors the "tip" as to Davitt's whereabouts, and they flocked down the narrow stair-case to the cabin, only to meet a point-blank refusal their request to bid their friend farewell. At length, after a deal of pressure had been brought to bear upon Williamson, the cabin door was unlocked for Doctor Kenny and Messrs. Egan and

Brennan. The doctor found his patient in a poor state, and suffering from a most exhausting cough, and the others had only time to whisper some words of comfort and good cheer to their dear comrade, when "all for shore" was shouted and there was a regular stampede to the gangways. And then the big ship whistled loudly into the still evening and moved slowly from her moorings, and Michael Davitt, thrice a martyr of British barbarity, was once again under weigh for a penal home in a country that he would have sunken beneath a thousand seas.



ON BOARD MAIL BOAT.

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THE *Freeman* was the only paper that despatched a special Correspondent with Davitt from Kingstown, and in the next day's paper (February 4th,) appeared the following graphic account of the sea passage, wired from Holyhead:—

Mine has not been a cheerful mission, nor has its surroundings tended in the least to diminish the gloom of the task. To see Michael Davitt across St. George's Channel in the clutches of eight detective officers, was not a pleasant duty. But it devolved upon me as a duty none the less. The night had been in keeping with its dull and dreary business, for it rained when it was not foggy, and the heavens all the time lowered most dismally. You have been told of all the details concerning Davitt's arrest by other pens than mine; of how he practically gave himself up, of his secret conveyance by road to Kingstown, in a cab, escorted by another cab-full of police officers, and of his safe keeping in a State cabin of the mail-boat at Kingstown. I travelled down from Westland Row by the mail train, with such tried and true friends and colleagues of the prisoner's as Patrick Egan and Messrs. Brennan and Harris, whilst I espied Dr. Kenny, Davitt's medical attendant, amongst the little knot of sympathisers. Westland-row was robbed of its busy stir of passengers for England. The train was all but deserted. There were a few ladies who had booked through for Paris, and they perhaps never heard of Davitt, but there was also *en route* the Irish Attorney-General. It was, no doubt, a trifle strange that two such extremes as Michael Davitt and Hugh Law should have met even upon the broad decks of a City of Dublin steampacket; but nevertheless it was so, and the train which brings Davitt to a dungeon home in a penal prison for many long years conveyed Hugh Law, her Majesty's Attorney-General for Ireland, to Downing Street, perhaps to pre-arrange more coercion and more buckshot for her impoverished people.

At Westland-row no one seemed to know more of the arrest of the political prisoner than the news-boys who, too, have had their days of persecution, but their hollowing out of the words "Arrest of Mr. Davitt; Evening Telegraph, last edition," indicated nothing to the casual observer more than the fact that Mr. Davitt had once again been pounced upon by gentlemen in plain clothes holding her Majesty's warrant. No one in the mail train apparently had time to learn the facts which startled the city at mid-day, and there certainly was no indication about to convey the idea that a great political figure was being stolen from the scene whereon he had performed some of his most remarkable acts. The crowd of sympathisers was far too small to create even a suspicion that there was anything up, nor did the Ulster coat of Mr. Attorney General go far towards inspiring with awe those who proceeded to leave Westland-row by the mail train. Neither time nor tide brook delay, and it is pretty much this way with the Anglo-Saxon mail service. The train left sharp to time, and ran through to the Carlisle Pier without check or incident. At the pier a cordon of police stretched across the mouth of the gangway to the boat, doubtless with an eye to an infernal machine or a ton or two of dynamite. The Kingstown superintendent was in full uniform, and Colonel Connolly, one of the Commissioners of Police, was about and busy. Mr. Mallon was on the quay displaying even more nervous anxiety than usual, and the constables and others holding minor rank seemed quite to appreciate the importance of the occasion. At first the superintendent of Dublin Detectives was stern as the Bull stone wall, and proclaimed that no one could see Mr. Davitt, but the beseeching voices of Messrs. Brennan and Egan were too much for this officer, who, under the genial glow of their eloquence and entreaties, considerably thawed. Dr. Kenny demanded an interview with Davitt. In his case there was no compliment about the matter at all, for was he not the prisoner's medical adviser? This even thawed Superintendent Williamson, the chief actor in the arrest, and the doctor gained a few words, and so did Mr. Egan and Mr. Brennan. But the mails were alongside, and once the hawser was loosed from the stem and stern of the ship, Davitt's last ties, for years at least, with Ireland seemed to me to be parted. The outlook was by no means a cheerful one, as the Connaught, with Captain Kendal as her commander, rounded the pier, the gong of which tolled dolefully as we glided by. The horizon was as obscured with fog and mist as Davitt's future is with doubt. The fog had enveloped the stars, and not a vestige of light caught the eye, save the masthead beacon of the mail boat. The Howth light might just as well have been at the bottom of a Lancashire colliery,

for it was not to be seen, and then it came on to rain most persistently. Meanwhile, let me sketch to you per pen and ink, by the electric current, Michael Davitt, the hero of a hundred League meetings. He was stowed away in the forepart of the ship in a sleeping saloon, escorted by eight detective officers, and here perhaps I may set down the names of those who composed this escort—Superintendent Williamson and Inspector Swansea, both of Scotland Yard, London, who held the warrant; and officers Ronan, Cooper, M'Cormack, Sheridan, Bowers, and Simons, of the G Division of police in Dublin. Davitt lay in his berth at leisure, if not, indeed, unconcernedly, with his watchers close at hand. His mind was too full of the past and future to permit of his resting absolutely, though at one time he just dozed, only to wake again to behold the terrible surroundings of his position—guarded upon all sides. The saloon became almost oppressive with the crowd of officers, and the least troubled possibly about the situation was Michael Davitt. He was cheerful, calm, collected, and suffered in a dread of *mal d mer*, which, under the circumstances, would have added one more feature of unpleasantness to a drama already brimful of ills. There was not much wind, scarce a capful, but there was one of those disagreeable swells on the water so fatal to those who are bilious. Inside locked doors, the watchmen of the prisoner somewhat relaxed their anxiety, but still there was no question that they felt Davitt a big charge, and a rich prize to bring back to a British prison. Davitt certainly appeared the least concerned by half. At times he chatted freely with such of the officers as he had known before, and as the big gun boomed through the fog off Holyhead, he even cracked a joke, remarking that he trusted if the ship went down no crime would be laid upon his head. The Superintendent in charge of the prisoner displayed on board a delicate care for self that did him justice, and it was just when he went aft to the saloon that I slipped in my card, asking the captive if I could fetch him some supper. The answer was to the effect that he was afraid of becoming sick, or he should avail himself of my offer, and when I urgently pressed some sandwiches on the poor fellow he declined them, remarking that he did not then feel in the least hungry. Once alongside the order was given by Superintendent Williamson to prepare, and then the prisoner, guarded upon one side by Swansea and on the other by Ronan, walked on board and up the gangway. His demeanour was not that of a man in so awful a position. He was cheerful, almost gay; and appeared to be not the least affected by the seriousness of his position. The platform on which he landed was crowded by all the available police force of Holyhead, and they formed an avenue from the gangway to the train,

through which this procession to a living grave passed along. In response to the guard, the Chief answered that all of the party had first-class tickets, and then Davitt and five of his guardians entered a compartment close to a sleeping saloon, Davitt travelling in a middle seat with his back to the engine, whilst the others of his guard of honour occupied an adjacent carriage. It was just now an opportunity presented itself to me to say good-by, and thrusting in my hand I bade the prisoner farewell in a cheerful tone. He said to me, "Good-by to dear old Ireland for ever," and when I remarked that he should not say "for ever," he corrected himself, saying, "Well, for a long time, anyhow;" and then the iron horse snorted, whistled, and started away, bearing on its course a captive whose absence will be to-day mourned all over Ireland. That the authorities feared something in the shape of a rescue is convincingly evident in the fact that extraordinary precautions were adopted. At Holyhead some detectives augmented the local force upon the platform, to which I have alluded; but far and away the most extraordinary step taken was the running of a pilot engine to London, which, ten minutes before the scheduled time for the starting of the mail, set off. This, I learn, is a more than unusual precaution, being only adopted in the case of Her Majesty the Queen using the line, and the utter uselessness of such a precautionary measure goes without saying. I learn that at Willesden Junction the prisoner and his escort will take the train to Victoria to avoid any demonstration at Euston, and that during the day he will be charged at one of the London police courts, most probably Bow-street.



HIS LAST SPEECH.

—:0:—

UPON Sunday, the 30th of January, Michael Davitt made his last open-air speech at Borris, Co. Carlow, when he said:—
“If all the powers of the heavens to drench cannot deter the thousands now surrounding this platform, from travelling miles upon a day like this, in order to take part in a demonstration against landlordism, there is not much fear of the impending reign of coercion damping your spirits or thinning the ranks of the Land League, in its mission to win free land and happy homes for the people of Ireland. Not yet two years ago, landlord absolutism sat supreme in Borris, where now the sentiment of the country rules instead. Your able and energetic representative, Mr. Edmund Dwyer Gray, has told you from the British Parliament, where he has been manfully battling with Parnell in your interest—he has told you that he has at last become ashamed of the name of Liberal. And well he may. We see now the party that boasted in the past that it could rule Ireland according to Irish ideas, allying itself with the deadly enemies of the people, in order to rob you of the little liberty you are now struggling to maintain. We see the philanthropic Gladstone, the humane and justice-loving John Bright, and the Chief Slanderer of Ireland, Mr. Outrage Forster, falling back upon police rule, prisons, and coercion, in order to sustain a system which is a blasphemy on the providence of God, an outrage upon reason, a crime against humanity, a scourge to Ireland. Never has an English statesman shown such contempt for a people and their religion, as has this unveiled prophet, when he declares he will restore our country to ‘a Christian and civilized existence,’ by the employment of brute force. That is, he will bring it back to a blind worship of Whig treachery, fidelity to landlord obstruction, and an unmurmuring toleration of rack-rents, confiscation, and eviction, by the persuasive logic of coercion

and punishment. Do you think he will succeed? Will this Chief Slanderer of Ireland, Mr. Outrage Forster, be able to fulfil his boast of striking terror into what his uncouth savagery has stigmatised as the ruffian, blackguard, and scoundrel people of Ireland? Will the prospect of a prison for a paltry year or eighteen months deter the men of the Irish race from fulfilling their duty to the country and themselves? Will he make us show our past history to be a dream, our bravery as wagging boast, and our disregard of suffering in the cause of justice and fatherland, but a false and empty heroism after all? If not, let Outrage Forster see that apprehension of arrest and imprisonment has no terror for the Young Ireland of to-day. Let this Chief Slanderer of our national character find courage and perseverance where his bullying nature thinks it will discover cowardice and apathy, and his Coercion Bill will prove to be the last will and testament of Irish landlordism, while his boast to strike terror into the ranks of the people, will dig for his fraudulent party an eternal grave in Ireland. Look upon this measure of coercion as a direct challenge to all that is courageous, manly, and honourable in Irish nature, and you will see it in its true light, and meet it with that determined resolution which has never yet quailed before arbitrary power or tyranny in our country. Do you believe that if the contest lay in another field than that of peaceful agitation, or was to be decided by other weapons than those of ideas, that you would strike your colours at the approach of danger, or surrender your arms at the sight of the foe? Would you not rather face the enemy with the pluck of your race, and swear that

‘Every turf beneath your feet
Should be a soldier’s sepulchre.’

rather than allow victory to be snatched from your hands? Landlordism, weighed with the crimes of centuries, and clogged with the spoils of robbery and injustice, has been dragged from its lair by the Land League and exposed to the astonished gaze of the civilized world. Its only support is brute force—its only hope of being recommended to mercy by the jury of public opinion is by fathering upon its victims the crimes which are born of its own infamous existence, and upon the Land League the practices which have made the word ‘landlordism’ in Ireland synonymous with every infamy, every wrong, and every crime that despotism could inflict upon a people. Against this villanous land code, on the other hand, what have we not battling upon our side—justice invincible and eternal, the intelligence of our country in revolt against the blasphemy that

God made the soil of Ireland for the sole profit and pleasure of ten thousand enemies of the Irish people. We have the public opinion of the civilized world sustaining us in this great moral struggle, and far over the waves of the Atlantic we have a new Ireland—the Ireland of our banished kindred—those who were driven from Ireland by Irish landlordism, and now stretching their generous hands across the ocean to help us to free Ireland once and for ever from that code of infamous land laws that drove them from Ireland in the past. Wherever an Irish colony is found in the United States or in Canada, branches of the Land League are springing up, in such numbers and with such forces, and are sending us such evidences of their vitality and sympathy, that landlordism will find that it is not a small island like this that it has to contend against, but the whole Irish race throughout the world. I have only, in conclusion, to ask you to follow the admirable advice given by our reverend chairman—not to allow yourselves to be forced into the commission of any crime or any offence which would bring a stain upon the national character, or give an argument or a weapon to your enemy to be used against you. Let Europe, let America, see by your dignified, determined conduct that the charges which are now paraded before the House of Commons have existed mainly in the imagination of that very imaginative force, the Irish Constabulary, and could find a place only in the policy of Mr. Outrage Forster. Do this, and above all stand united, shoulder to shoulder, in the future, as you have been in the past. Don't be frightened from your land meetings, don't be intimidated by landlords who now fancy that they are going to get back from the Government the absolute power they wielded in the past. Don't be tempted into breaking that cardinal rule of the Irish Land League not to take a farm out of which another has been evicted for non-payment of an unjust rent—not to purchase any goods stolen by Irish landlordism from impoverished tenant-farmers. If you do this, if you act on this advice, you will find in a very short time that the English Government will give over manufacturing both outrages and coercion bills, and instead of being on the point of suppressing the Irish members in Parliament, they will have to acknowledge the justice of their claim on behalf of the Irish People—the justice of the claim of the Irish People to have restored to Ireland the soil which God intended for its people, and every blessing which He intended to be their privilege.

LAST TIME AT A LEAGUE MEETING.

ON Wednesday, February 2nd, Mr. Davitt was present at the Land League Meeting, when he said that when last Mr. Ferguson had occupied the chair, he (Mr. Davitt) on behalf of the executive, had to make an announcement that when the Government measure on the Land Question was outlined a convention of League Delegates should be held to make a pronouncement on the Bill. No further steps in the matter had been taken. He had, however, proceeded to London the night before last, and he had a consultation with Mr. Parnell and other Members of the Executive of the League, and they and the members here were of opinion that steps should be taken for the holding of the convention forthwith. The reasons, he thought, which prompt them to call this Convention now were first, to show Mr. Forster and England, by an assemblage of the League representatives in Dublin, that the local leaders of the organisation are neither ruffians, blackguards, nor scoundrels; and, second, to show Mr. Outrage Forster, the Chief Slanderer of Ireland, that his Coercion Bill will not strike terror into the ranks of the Land League. It would be the object of the Convention to make a National pronouncement against Coercion as well as against real and manufactured outrages, and to make known once more the National demand of Ireland on the Land Question. The question of the franchise for the Convention had also been reconsidered, and it was thought that one delegate for each hundred cards of membership issued from the central office would make the number too large, as there were branches with 1,500 and even 2,500 members. It was, therefore, considered desirable to have one delegate for each branch having 500 members and under. They thought it not desirable to fix the date at present, but that the election should take

place at the next meeting of the branches; and when the Coercion Bill passed, and the Land Bill was introduced the date could be fixed and the delegates communicated with by telegraph. The place of meeting, of course, would be Dublin. Mr. Davitt then moved a resolution the nature of which will appear from the following copy of a circular to be issued to the other branches :—

“Offices of the Land League,
“39 Upper Sackville Street, February 3rd, 1881.

“To the Officers and members of — Branch of the Land League.—At a meeting of the Land League held on yesterday a resolution was adopted calling upon the Branches to proceed at once with the election of delegates to represent them at the coming Convention. Each branch will, therefore, on receipt of one of these circulars, proceed at its next regular meeting, if due to be held within a week from this date, or a special meeting to be held within one week from receipt of this notice, to elect delegates as follows— Each Branch numbering five hundred members and under to elect one delegate; each branch numbering over five hundred members to elect two delegates. Any officer, member of executive committee, or member of a Branch is eligible for election. The election of delegates shall take place in the same manner as the election of officers specified in Rule 3 of the Rules of the League. Delegates’ cards of admission to the Convention will be forwarded to each branch, upon which cards the credentials of delegates must be written and signed by the executive of each Branch. The exact date of Convention will be given by the executive council to each Branch by letter or telegraphic message when exact date is determined upon.

“THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE LAND LEAGUE.”

Mr. Sheridan seconded the motion.

Mr. Davitt heartily endorsed the resolution, and he also endorsed what had been said by Mr. Egan about the renegades; but he regretted that the first man to desert Mr. Parnell and the Irish people, was one who commands great influence on English public opinion—Mr. Shaw. He had a conversation with Mr. Shaw in the House of Commons, and he had asked him why he did not postpone his separation from Mr. Parnell until after the fight against coercion. He had chosen to do so; and in consequence of that, he thought the matter deserved the very serious attention of his constituents in Cork County. They deserted their friends in mid battle, and before the enemy, and when two nations are at war, for that conduct the sentence was

death. He (Mr. Davitt) said the sentence to be passed on these renegade members should be political death; and their constituents should prepare that sentence right away.

The resolution was adopted.

Mr. Davitt moved:—

“That the warmest thanks of the Irish National Land League are hereby given to JOSEPH COWEN, Esq., M.P., and HENRY LABOUCHERE, Esq., M.P., for their constitutional efforts to prevent the old wretched tactics of coercion, which have so embittered the relations between the English and the Irish people; and at the same time we desire to express our gratitude to those other high-minded English members who desire to reform bad laws before coercing men by such an Algerine enactment, as that contemplated by the so-called Liberal Government of England.”

He had the pleasure of being in the House of Commons while Mr. Labouchere was speaking, and he believed it was his able speech that first got Mr. Gladstone to pay any attention to these reported outrages. He had also had the pleasure of speaking to Mr. Cowen, and asking him to send over a copy of his speech at Newcastle, that they might print it, and he was happy to say that 20,000 copies of it would shortly be in circulation.

Dr. Kenny seconded the motion, and suggested the addition of the name of Mr. THOMSON, M.P.

The suggestion was adopted, and the resolution as amended was passed.

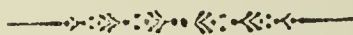
On the motion of Mr. Egan, seconded by Mr. Davitt, a resolution was passed, granting a sum of £25 towards a testimonial about to be presented to the Rev. Mr. Patterson, who, Mr. Egan said, had done good service to the Tenant Cause by opposing the Leinster Lease.

Mr. Davitt said he wished to refer to a subject on which several letters had been received. He did not believe that the arrests would be anything like as numerous as was being predicted throughout the country. But he thought their duty was clear in reference to the families who may have some of their members arrested—that if a father, or a brother, or a son was arrested, those dependent on them should not be forgotten. He wished also to call attention to a fact that had come to his knowledge—that the Rev. Mr. Lynch, a Catholic clergyman in Springfield, Massachusetts, had bought an estate in the County Cavan, which the tenants themselves were desirous of buying. He mentioned it in the hope that the Rev. Mr. Lynch might be led to undo what he had done.

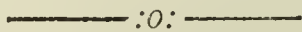
Mr. Davitt said the following telegram had just been received from Mr. T. P. O'Connor:—

“Mr. Gladstone has given notice of a resolution to confer despotic powers on the Speaker, and has bought Tory support by limiting the new form of caesarism to the battle of the Irish members against coercion. The Irish members are unmoved in their determination to continue their dogged and relentless opposition to every step and every stage of the bill.”

The proceedings then terminated.



AT BOW STREET.



The story of the “Trial” in London is an easy told one. Davitt got out of the train at Willesden Junction, and drove in a covered carriage to Bow Street Police Station, off the Strand, where Williamson, who “had” the prisoner in 1870, identified him as Michael Davitt who had been convicted in that year. Poor Davitt was then ordered to return to prison to complete his cruel sentence.



IN JAIL IN 1881.

—:0:—

IN the House of Commons on Monday, February 7th, Davitt's treatment was made the subject of a "Question," and all Ireland will rejoice to see that rather humane treatment is to be given to the illustrious prisoner:—

Mr. Bryce—I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will cause inquiries to be made whether Mr. Davitt, who has lately been arrested in Dublin, is now in a weak state of health; and whether, if so, he will give directions that Mr. Davitt shall not be sent to any place, nor required to perform any work which may injuriously affect his health?

Captain O'Shea—At the same time I may ask the right hon. gentleman a question of which I have given him private notice, which is, whether he will inform the House what are the instructions of Her Majesty's Government to the prison authorities with respect to the treatment of Mr. Michael Davitt?

The Home Secretary—Immediately that Mr. Davitt was taken into custody, I ordered that a medical report should be made on his condition, and it was made on the 4th February. The medical report stated that he was suffering from bronchial catarrh, to which he said he was subject. I have, therefore, given instructions that he should be treated with all possible indulgence, and that the greatest possible attention should be paid to the care of his health. In reply to the other portion of the hon. member's question, I have to answer that he certainly will not be sent to any place which would be injurious to his health, and that subject was considered with reference to the place he has now been sent to. I have also to state that he will not be required to do any work that would be injurious to his health,

and in his case there are circumstances which render him a peculiarly unfit subject for prison work, and I have also directed that particular attention should be given to his having proper diet, proper rooms, and proper bedding, that he is to be kept apart from the other convicts, and that he is to be treated as persons under probation are treated. These are the general instructions given at present, and further instructions will be given when a report has been received from the governor of the prison in which he is detained.

An hon. member asked if Davitt was in hospital, as stated in some quarters ?

The Home Secretary—I have no reason to believe so ; no such information has reached me.

Mr. Finigan (who received much interruption on rising, and was met with cries of “ Order, order ”)—Might I ask the Home Secretary whether Mr. Davitt will be habited as an ordinary convict or otherwise ?

The Home Secretary—With regard to the prison dress, I have received information that it is considered necessary as a security against escape, and therefore I do not feel justified in dispensing with it. I have, directed however, that his hair shall not be cut, and when he travels on a railway he shall travel in his own clothes, and not in prison clothes.



TICKET-OF-LEAVE.

—:O:—

As great interest at this moment centres in the case of Mr. Michael Davitt, we append below a copy of his "Ticket-of-Leave." Mr. Davitt was twice before Chief Justice Cockburn at the Central Criminal Court in 1870, and was sentenced to 15 years' penal servitude for treason-felony, his fellow accused, Mr. Wilson, being sentenced to seven years. The gravamen of the charge was having arms for Fenian purposes, and Mr. Davitt from the dock asked that Wilson should be spared as his connection with the transaction was only a commercial one, and that he would be willing to suffer the whole terms himself. Sir A. Cockburn said he was unable to accept this offer, but he praised the generosity of spirit which induced Mr. Davitt to make it. Mr. Davitt's Ticket-of-Leave was signed by the Right Hon. R. A. Cross, the Home Secretary; and Sir E. F. DuCane, Chairman of Convict Prisons:—



ORDER OF LICENCE TO A CONVICT MADE UNDER THE STATUTES 16 AND 17
VICT., C. 99, S. 9, AND 27 AND 28 VICT., C. 47, S. 4.

WHITEHALL,

19th day of December, 1877.

HER MAJESTY is graciously pleased to grant to *Michael Davitt*, who was convicted of *Treason=Felony* at the *Central Criminal Court*, holden in the *City of London* on the *20th day of July, 1870*, and was then and there sentenced to be kept in Penal Servitude for the term of *fifteen years*, and is now confined in *Dartmoor Prison*.

Her Royal Licence is to be at large from the day of his liberation under this order, during the remaining portion of his said term of Penal Servitude, unless the said *Michael Davitt* shall, before the expiration of the said term, be convicted of some indictable offence within the United Kingdom, in which case such Licence will be immediately forfeited by law, or unless it shall please her Majesty sooner to revoke or alter such Licence.

This Licence is given subject to the conditions endorsed upon the same, upon the breach of any of which it shall be liable to be revoked, whether such breach is followed by a conviction or not.

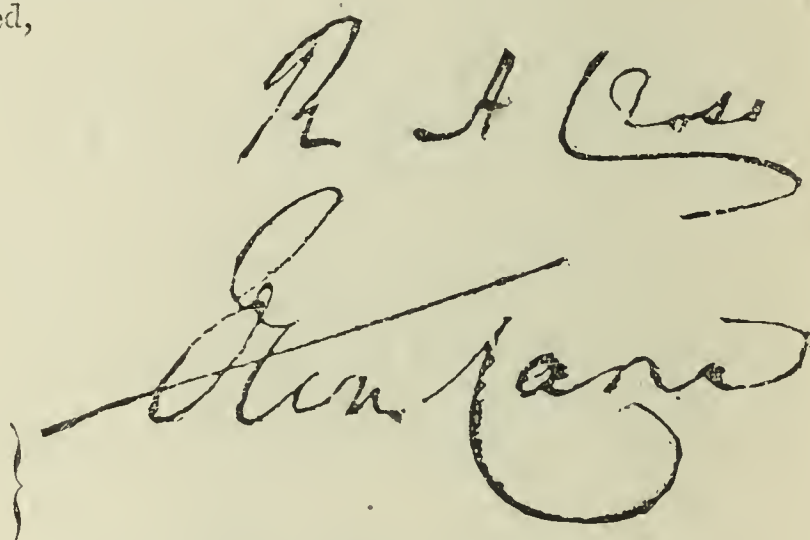
And her Majesty hereby orders that the said *Michael Davitt* be set at liberty within Thirty Days from the date of this Order.

Given under my hand and Seal,

Signed,

TRUE COPY.

LICENCE TO BE AT
LARGE.



Chairman of the Directors }
of Convict Prisons. }

THIS LICENCE WILL BE FORFEITED IF THE HOLDER DOES NOT OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS—

The Holder shall preserve his Licence, and produce it when called upon to do so by a Magistrate or Police Officer.

He shall abstain from any violation of the Law.

He shall not habitually associate with notoriously bad characters, such as reputed thieves and prostitutes.

He shall not lead an idle and dissolute life, without visible means of obtaining an honest livelihood.

If his licence is forfeited or revoked in consequence of a conviction for any Offence, he will be liable to undergo a Term of Penal Servitude equal to the portion of his term of fifteen years, which remained unexpired when his licence was granted.

The attention of the Licence-holder is directed to the following provisions of
"The Prevention of Crimes' Act, 1871."

If it appears from the facts proved before a court of summary jurisdiction that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the convict so brought before it is getting his livelihood by dishonest means, such convict shall be deemed to be guilty of an offence against the Prevention of Crimes' Act, and his licence shall be forfeited.

Every holder of a licence granted under the Penal Servitude Acts who is at large in Great Britain or Ireland, shall notify the place of his residence to the chief officer of police of the district in which his residence is situated, and shall, whenever he changes such residence within the same police district, notify such change to the chief officer of police of that district, and whenever he changes his residence from one police district to another, shall notify such change of residence to the chief officer of police of the police district which he is leaving, and to the chief officer of police of the police district into which he goes to reside; moreover, every male holder of such a Licence as aforesaid shall, once in each month, report himself at such time as may be prescribed by the chief officer of police of the district in which such holder may be, either to such chief officer himself or to such other person as that Officer may direct, and such report may, according as such chief officer directs, be required to be made personally or by letter.

If any holder of a licence, who is at large in Great Britain or Ireland, remains in any place for forty-eight hours without notifying the place of his residence to the chief officer of police of the district in which such place is situated, or fails to comply with the requisitions of this section on the occasion of any change of residence, or with the requisitions of this section as to reporting himself once in each month, he shall in every such case, unless he proves to the satisfaction of the Court before whom he is tried that he did his best to act in conformity with the law, be guilty of an offence against the Prevention of Crimes' Act, and upon conviction thereof his licence may in the discretion of the Court be forfeited, or if the term of Penal Servitude in respect of which his licence was granted has expired, at the date of his conviction, it shall be lawful for the court to sentence him to imprisonment, with or without Hard Labour, for a term not exceeding one year, or if the said term of Penal Servitude has not expired, but the remainder unexpired thereof is a lesser period than one year, then to sentence him to imprisonment, with or without Hard Labour, to commence at the expiration of the said term of Penal Servitude, for such a term as, together with the remainder unexpired of his said term of Penal Servitude, will not exceed one year.

Where any person is convicted on indictment of a crime, and a previous conviction of a crime is proved against him, he shall, at any time within seven years immediately after the expiration of the sentence passed on him for the last of such crimes, be guilty of an offence against the Prevention

of Crimes' Act, and be liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for a term not exceeding one year, under the following circumstances or any of them:—

FIRST. If, on his being charged by a constable with getting his livelihood by dishonest means, and being brought before a court of summary jurisdiction, it appears to such court that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the person so charged is getting his livelihood by dishonest means; or,

SECONDLY. If, on being charged with any offence punishable on indictment or summary conviction, and on being required by a court of summary jurisdiction to give his name and address he refuses to do so, or gives a false name or a false address; or,

THIRDLY. If he is found in any place, whether public or private, under such circumstances as to satisfy the court before whom he is brought, that he was about to commit or to aid in the commission of any offence punishable on indictment or summary conviction, or was waiting for an opportunity to commit or aid in the commission of any offence punishable on indictment or summary conviction; or,

FOURTHLY. If he is found in or upon any dwellinghouse, or any building, yard or premises, being parcel of or attached to such dwellinghouse, or in or upon any shop, warehouse, countinghouse, or other place of business, or in any garden, orchard, pleasure-ground, or nursery-ground, or in any building or erection in any garden, orchard, pleasure-ground, or nursery-ground, without being able to account to the satisfaction of the Court before whom he is brought for his being found on such premises.

